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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: July 11, 1959

SUBJECT: Possible Joint US-UK Military Planning

PARTICIPANTS: The British Ambassador
The Under Secretary

Declassified To: ~~SECRET~~ CONFIDENTIAL
E.O. 11652: X
Authenticity: H
Aug. 4, 1992 *HR/S*

COPIES TO: Secretary McElroy
Gordon Gray
General Goodpaster

The Secretary
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*ditto made
in S/S*

Ambassador Caccia asked to ride back with me from Andrews Field after the departure of Secretary Herter. He said he wished to put forward a few long term thoughts. If we could assume the successful conclusion of the Geneva negotiations and a successful Summit Meeting we probably would have a moratorium of two or more years. It would be important that we take advantage of this moratorium to strengthen the Western position in every way possible.

In the military field this would mean assuring ourselves that the Western powers were making the necessary overall effort and were channeling their resources to the most important areas. It might be necessary to take some hard decisions, which might involve both increases in expenditures and increases in manpower. For instance, the Ambassador doubted if the Western position was adequate in the field of limited war. It might be advisable to make a substantially increased effort to enlarge the power of our conventional forces, both on the continent of Europe and elsewhere. It seemed to the Ambassador that these forces did not have the maximum mobility that might be desired. In this connection, the Ambassador said that if the Macmillan Government should be successful in the next election the time for them to take such action as might be necessary to increase the manpower in the British Defense Forces and to increase British defense expenditures would be in the year or two immediately following the electoral success.

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If the British were to take such action it would appear advisable to have discussions with U.S. Defense officials so as to make sure that our combined efforts were channeled in the right direction. For instance, the Ambassador wondered whether the cost to Great Britain of the present British nuclear effort was worthwhile in the overall context of US-UK capabilities. He said he hoped the US would be willing to enter into such talks shortly after the British elections, assuming that a moratorium with the Soviets had been reached and the Conservative Government was continued in office.

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